

SB-475 TESTIMONY
RON CORN
MENOMINEE COUNTY COORDINATOR

Thank committee for holding the hearing (and Sen Holperin if he is there).

Introduce yourself: name, position

Menominee County supports SB-475. The bill is really a technical corrections bill.

The state budget contained a provision authored by Sen Holperin that was designed to assist a county like Menominee that was facing high costs of delinquent juveniles being sentenced to a state facility if the order was made by a TRIBAL COURT and not the COUNTY COURT.

The language in the budget forgot to include the words "by tribal courts" and this bill simply inserts those 3 words.

As many of you probably know Menominee County is the poorest county in the state. The entire county is also the Menominee Indian Reservation. Only 1% of the property in the county is on the property tax roles.

You can imagine the pressure this puts not only the county, but the town and the school district as well. We face tremendous funding challenges in just about every service we provide.

The Menominee Tribe helps fund some of our costs but they too have financial challenges and like the county are one of the poorest tribes in the state.

That is why Sen Holperin tried to set aside \$75,000 in the budget to assist with the high cost of juvenile placements.

Due to jurisdiction all juvenile problems are handled by the tribal police and tribal court but then the county pays most of the cost of out of home placements. For a small county with 4,700 residents (95% Native American) and almost no property tax base these types of costs are prohibitive.

The average cost for juvenile detention approximates \$225,000 over the past five years.

The \$75,000 in the state budget will certainly be of help.

Your support for this bill will be appreciated.

If you have any questions, I would be glad to try to answer.

Thank you.

Background Info:

1. County would need to spend \$50,000 of its own money before it could apply to the state. Tribe can also apply if it spends \$50,000.
2. Menominee County right now is only county that could apply since the Menominee Tribal Court is the only tribal court that adjudicates juveniles. Other tribes have court systems but right now none handle juveniles.